

# OBSERVATION POST

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

FEBRUARY 20, 2009 SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957 VOL. 52 ISSUE 7

## Leaving their mark

### 2/7 Marines train alongside Japanese, Singaporean allies

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

A detachment of Marines and sailors from 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, joined forces with Marines and sailors from 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, based at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, to host members of the

Singaporean Armed Forces and Japanese Ground Self Defense Force at Camp Pendleton Feb. 1 through 12.

The units hosted the foreign forces as part of Exercises Valiant Mark and Iron Fist, in order to increase the trilateral training exercises amongst all involved, said 1st Lt. C.D. Ferreira, the officer in charge of the 2/7 detachment.

In order to continue the development of an amphibious capability, the Japanese conducted training for their forces, while the SAF conducted mechanized, amphibious, urban, and interoperability operations.

During the training the Marines and sailors, along  
See 2/7, A8



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Marines with Weapons Platoon, Company F, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, support members of the Singaporean Armed Forces during a joint assault of a military operations in urban terrain facility at Range 25 at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 10.

## World War II vet speaks to, inspires Sergeant's Course

CPL. MARGARET HUGHES  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Sergeant's Course class 2-09 welcomed 91-year-old Louis Zamperini, a former Olympian and World War II veteran, with a standing ovation before he spoke Wednesday afternoon in the Sergeant's Course classroom.

The course's instructors and staff choose a Marine from each class to accept the Louis Zamperini Leadership Award, which is given to the sergeant who exemplifies great leadership throughout the course, said Gunnery Sgt.

Melvin Coe, the chief instructor for the Sergeant's Course. The award for this class will be presented to the deserving Marine Tuesday.

The award was established to honor Zamperini because of his leadership qualities and perseverance to fight through continuous hardships, according to Coe.

"He gives the example of leadership and strength," Coe said. "He is proof that regardless of the situation at the time, you can pull through almost anything."

Zamperini's life is an inspiring story of

See VET, A5



CPL. MARGARET HUGHES

Louis Zamperini, a former Olympian and World War II veteran, talks to the Combat Center's Sergeant's Course class 2-09 Wednesday in the Sergeant's Course classroom. His life is an inspiring story of persistence and overcoming odds while being held in a prisoner of war camp for a large part of the war.

## OEF vets commended for being 'Ready for all, yielding to none'

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Five Marines and sailors from 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, received Bronze Star Medals in recognition of their heroic actions during their recent deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in a ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field, Feb. 12.

The five Marines and sailors who received the Bronze Star Medals were:

Maj. Urbano Cruz, the commander of Weapons Company, and a Lake Worth, Fla., native.

1st Lt. Jon Wilkins, the executive officer of Weapons Company, and a Torrance, Calif., native.

1st Lt. Charley R. Massey, a platoon commander with Combined Anti-Armor Team 2, and a Richland, Mich., native.

Navy Lt. Robert Benowicz, the medical personnel officer-in-charge for Company E, and a Portland, Ore., native.

Petty Officer 1st Class Wil Morales, a hospital corpsman with Company

F, and a Brooklyn, N.Y., native.

Massey and Morales both received a Combat

Distinguishing Devices with their Bronze Star

See STARS, A7



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

1st Lt. Jon Wilkins, the executive officer of Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, stands proudly after receiving his Bronze Star Medal at a ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field, Feb. 12.



Marines grapple with Singaporean soldiers - See A3



2/7 receives new head 'War Dog' See A6



Fight Club 29 rolls with the punches See B1



Learn to fly - See B1

# Identity theft proclamation

COL. ROBERT J. ABBLITT  
CHIEF OF STAFF

Identity theft is a serious crime, one that impacts people from all walks of life and in our community; and MCAGCC Twentynine Palms is committed to fighting identity theft by collaborating with local residents and other organizations to educate our service members, their families and the general public about this issue.

The United States Marine Corps has a proud history of actively supporting the education of its service members in the prevention of all crime; and Naval Criminal Investigative Service and the MCCS wish to educate all service members, their families and the general public about how to avoid identity theft by deterring, detecting and defending against it. MCAGCC Twentynine Palms recognizes that ongoing education and preparation for safe communities is necessary for a peaceful quality of life, February 25 will be a day to focus on: Protect Your Identity aboard MCAGCC Twentynine Palms.

Personnel and their families are encouraged to participate in our efforts to prevent identity theft, thereby strengthening our Marine Corps community.

# DoD attacks smokeless tobacco usage

FALLS CHURCH, Va.—In a month-long initiative to promote the Great American Spit Out and Through With Chew Week, the U.S. Department of Defense and TRICARE are deploying all the weapons in their arsenals. The target of the attack is the smokeless, but far from harmless, spit or chewing tobacco, often simply referred to as “dip.”

The operation will kick off at the DoD tobacco cessation Web site, <http://www.uacanquit2.org>, the online headquarters of the multi-year campaign, “Quit Tobacco—Make Everyone Proud.”

The Web site offers an innovative array of high-tech mechanisms and interactive tools to help service members follow through with their plans to quit. In the newly launched My QuitSpace, registered users can create a blog, either public or private, to document their journey and share their experiences. They may also download a customizable quit plan and quit calendar, adding personalized information, goals, tips and dates.

Many service members trying to quit tobacco have questions. The Web site has responded to this need by introducing an Ask the Expert feature. Captain Larry N. Williams, U.S. Navy Tobacco Clinical Cessation Champion, will be the guest expert throughout the month of February. He will answer questions from smokeless tobacco users and those who support their intention to quit, including health promotion and health care professionals on military installations.

Service members and others are encouraged to visit the Web site and submit questions about smokeless tobacco usage, health risks, quit strategies and more. The Web site will post Dr. Williams’ responses on a daily basis.

The multifaceted resources at the award-winning Web site are designed to arm service men and women with the tools they need to win the battle against tobacco. It also allows service members to get support from family and friends to quit, no matter where they live, as well as professional counseling. Through Live Chat, a unique online service, users get immediate real-time help from trained tobacco Cessation Coaches from 8:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. EST.

Visitors can also take part in the discussion boards, read a new online article debunking the myths surrounding smokeless tobacco, and play games, such as Texas Hold ‘em, which deals out informative and motivational messages with the cards.

For more information, visit <http://www.uacanquit2.org>

# TREE CHEERS

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59					60		61						
62					63				64				
65					66				67				

American Profile Hometown Content

01/11/09

### ACROSS

- 1. Sudden outburst
- 6. Garden hose crimp
- 10. Middle of a triple jump
- 14. Liver, but not notions
- 15. Shaving gel additive
- 16. Russia's \_\_\_ Mountains
- 17. Place to store crops
- 19. "You betcha"
- 20. Fighting words
- 21. Biblical shout of praise
- 23. Really hard on the eyes
- 25. Dirty dishes locale
- 26. Traveler's bag
- 30. Tech caller
- 32. Cry out loud
- 35. Decathlon unit
- 36. Treat served with tea
- 37. Norton, to Kramden
- 38. Straight up, at the bar
- 39. Make smooth, in away
- 40. Von Braun's org.
- 41. Comics bark
- 42. Wearing a puss
- 43. "It slices, it \_\_\_"
- 44. Columbo et al.: Abbr.
- 45. Cookery's Rombauer
- 46. One of wine's Gallo brothers
- 47. Clobber with snowballs
- 49. Auto parts giant
- 51. Auto safety item
- 54. Seventeen-year bugs
- 59. Skip over
- 60. Place to make deposits
- 62. Baskin-Robbins buy
- 63. Be gaga over
- 64. Paint finish
- 65. WHO and NOW, for two: Abbr.
- 66. Got a gander of
- 67. Put to shame

### DOWN

- 1. Really ticked
- 2. "I" or "me": Abbr.
- 3. Bug-eyed
- 4. Brit's "later!"
- 5. Form a hard coating on
- 6. Superman, at birth
- 7. Green around the gills
- 8. Father of Ham
- 9. Lamp fuel
- 10. Lazy girl?
- 11. Selling point for a full-size auto, perhaps
- 12. Bring home
- 13. "Nolocontendere," e.g.
- 18. Small advantage
- 22. Knightly address
- 24. Cancun's peninsula
- 26. Open to bribery
- 27. Fend off
- 28. Auto suspension part
- 29. Negative stat for a QB
- 31. Play Station maker
- 33. Caravan stop overs
- 34. Great time, slangily
- 36. Inner city eye sore
- 39. Like a laptop
- 40. "Delta of Venus" author
- 42. Tidy sum
- 43. Pre-euro Greek currency
- 46. Grander than grand
- 48. \_\_\_ Park, Colo.
- 50. In need of Clearasil
- 51. Chanel of fashion
- 52. "Omnia vincit \_\_\_"
- 53. "Iliad" locale
- 55. Common rhyme scheme
- 56. Flash drive filler
- 57. Aardvark's meal
- 58. \_\_\_-Ball (arcade game)
- 61. Many a Monopoly property: Abbr.

[puzzle Solutions on A6]

# Combat Center Spotlight



**Name:** Lance Cpl. Ricky John Holt  
**Hometown:** Salt Lake, Utah  
**Job Title:** Videographer  
**Organization:** Combat Camera  
**Job Duties:** Documenting the training that occurs at the Combat Center  
**What Do You Like Best About Your Job:** When I am able to grab great footage and seeing the different things that occur on base.  
**Significant Achievements:** I'm proud of supporting TTECG with video support for their training.  
**Hobbies:** Poker, mechanics, and sports  
**Military Service:** Almost two years in the Marine Corps  
**Time at the Combat Center:** Almost a year

# Hot Topics

### NEW GYM HOURS

The East and West Gym/Fitness Centers new hours of operation will be 4:30 a.m. – 10 p.m., seven days a week.

### ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

An Ash Wednesday service will be held in the Protestant Chapel Wednesday from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

### SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS OPENS NEW OFFICE

Starting today, San Bernardino County Department of Veterans Affairs will have a part-time office in Room 82 of The Village Center at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms. The office will be open every Thursday from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Certified veteran services representative can help veterans and their dependents with VA claims, case management services and applications for monetary and health care benefits. Additional part-time offices located in the Morongo Basin include:

**Yucca Valley Office**  
 56357 Pima Trail  
 Yucca Valley, CA 92284  
 (760) 228-5234

Open Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**Twentynine Palms Office**  
 73629 Sun Valley Drive  
 Twentynine Palms, CA 92277  
 (760) 361-4636

Open Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

# This Day in Marine Corps History

Feb. 20, 1815

Capt. Archibald Henderson leads Marines in the Constitution's victory over Cyane and Levant

# SUDOKU

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9			2	8		5		7
		2			7	3	6	4
	1					9		

# Centerspeak

## What did you do over President's Day weekend?

Opinions expressed in Centerspeak are not necessarily those of the OBSERVATION POST, the Marine Corps or Department of Defense.



PVT. ISAAC CARMICHAEL  
STUDENT, BRAVO Co., MCCES

"I hung out with other Marines in my class and watched movies."



SEAMAN APPRENTICE  
JOSHUA HUDSON  
CORPSMAN, BRAVO Co., 3RD LAR BATTALION

"I literally did nothing. I stayed home in Joshua Tree with my wife."



CPL. AARON BROWN  
FRENCH HORN PLAYER, COMBAT CENTER BAND, HEADQUARTERS BATTALION

"I picked up a friend from the airport and did laundry."

# OBSERVATION POST

Commanding General Brig. Gen. Charles M. Gurganus

Public Affairs Officer Jennie E. Haskamp

Public Affairs Chief Gunnery Sgt. Sergio Jimenez

Press Chief/Editor Lance Cpl. Corey A. Blodgett

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# War Dogs get down and dirty with Singaporean allies

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines and sailors from Companies G and F, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, showed off their combat fitness skills to members of the Singaporean Armed Forces at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 4.

The demonstration was part of Exercise Valiant Mark, an annual exchange exercise conducted between the Marine Corps and the SAF, which included Marines and sailors from Company C, 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, stationed at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

As part of the training, the warfighters from 2/7 and the SAF participated in the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program, grappling bouts and ran through an obstacle course, all in the name of friendly competition and team building.

"I think it was a very well rounded practical application," said Staff Sgt. Carlos J. Hernandez, the 2nd platoon sergeant of Company G.



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Sgt. Carlos J. Hernandez, the platoon sergeant of 2nd Platoon, Company G, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, watches as members of the Singaporean Armed Forces maneuver the obstacle course at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 4.

"Not just of MCMAP, but of combat fitness in general."

In addition to combat fit-

ness, the demonstration allowed members of both services to learn valuable foreign customs and courtesies, and eliminate any sense of uneasiness they may have had prior to dealing with foreign nationals, which may have been harbored by the service members of both forces, he said.

Because of the gains that can be made by all participating nations, there definitely has to be more bilateral training with foreign nationals both in the United States and abroad said the Los Angeles native.

"Building relations with foreign nations is a force multiplier," said Hernandez.

After the activities concluded, Tan Guowen, a rifleman with the SAF, said he was very impressed with MCMAP.

"It was very interesting," said Guowen. "It's something new to us."

Guowen said the SAF have their own martial arts program but it is more focused on defensive tactics, while MCMAP incorporates defensive and offensive strategies, which is something he would like to see more of in the SAF program.

Guowen was also impressed with the Corps' obstacle course, because while it was shorter than the SAF course, it tested agility as well as muscle, cardiovascular and core strength, all of which are essential in combat.

He also said, like Hernandez, he would like to see more training exercises between the two nations in an effort to build rapport between the two forces.

The feeling of importance of the bilateral training was also shared by other Marines participating in the day's events.

"It was a good experience to work with the



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Cpl. Edward Corona, a machine gunner with Weapons Platoon, Company F, 2/7, grapples with a member of the Singaporean Armed Forces during a demonstration of the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program hosted by the Marines and sailors of 2/7 at Camp Pendleton Feb. 4.

Singaporeans," said Lance Cpl. Noel Huerta, a mortarman with Weapons Platoon, Company F.

In addition to providing the warriors of 2/7 with a break from the desert atmosphere, the training built a solid friendship between everyone involved and therefore should be continued, said the North Las Vegas, Nev., native.

Marines and the SAF are slated to renew their friendship in mid-2009 when a second version of Valiant Mark is conducted in Singapore.



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Lance Cpl. Michael K. Fowler, a rifleman with 2nd Platoon, Company G, 2/7 and a soldier from the Singaporean Armed Forces congratulate each other on a good race after the two competed to see who could maneuver the obstacle course in less time while training together at Camp Pendleton Feb. 4.



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Marines with 2nd Platoon, Company G, 2/7, help soldiers with the Singaporean Armed Forces practice buddy crunches while training at Camp Pendleton Feb. 4.

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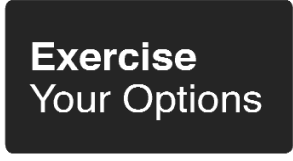
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# NCIS pulling plug on identity theft

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

As technology has become more advanced and identity theft protection becomes more sophisticated, stealing someone's personally identifiable information has become a challenge.

However, the thieves are still out there coming up with new ways to burgle PII and use someone else's identity for their own personal gain.

In response to this ever present threat, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service's Criminal Reduction Program is shifting its focus to identity theft awareness to help protect active duty service members, Department of the Navy employees and their families.

"Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in our country," said Special Agent Carrie Nelson, the NCIS Crime Reduction Program coordinator, in a Feb. 10 article from NCIS public affairs in Washington, D.C. "The campaign is designed to highlight the protective actions individuals can take to safeguard themselves from becoming a victim."

NCIS has team up with the Federal Trade Commission to "deter, detect, and defend" against identity theft. At the Combat Center, Special Agent Kris Proev, an NCIS investigator, is leading the campaign to help raise awareness for base personnel and their families.

"In the military, you live in tight quarters," Proev said. "Marines live on ships and in the barracks, making it easier to lose your personal information. It's important to keep that stuff safeguarded."

Following the three steps provided by the FTC - deter, detect and defend - will help people keep their PII secure, which is the best way to prevent thieves from stealing your identity, he added.

According to the FTC, deterring identity theft means to take active steps toward safeguarding PII. This means shredding personal financial documents before throwing them out, protecting social security and personal identification numbers, and keeping personal information in a secure place.

Other ways to deter identity theft

**See ID THEFT, A6**

### DETER

- Shred financial documents and paperwork with personal information before you discard them.
- Protect your Social Security number. Give it out only if absolutely necessary or ask to use another identifier.
- Don't give out personal information on the phone, through the mail, or over the Internet unless you know who you are dealing with.

### DETECT

Be alert for signs that require immediate attention:

- Bills that do not arrive as expected
- Unexpected credit cards or account statements
- Denials of credit for no apparent reason
- Calls or letters about purchases you did not make

### INSPECT:

- Your credit report. Credit reports contain information about you, including what accounts you have and your bill paying history.

### DEFEND

- Place a "Fraud Alert" on your credit reports and review the reports carefully.
- Close any accounts that have been tampered with or established fraudulently.
- Call the security or fraud departments of each company where an account was opened or changed without your approval. Follow up in writing with copies of supporting documents.

\* Use your ID Theft Affidavit at <http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft> to support your written statement.

\* Ask for verification that the disputed

- Never click on links sent in unsolicited e-mails. Use firewalls, anti-spyware and anti-virus software to protect your home computer; keep them up to date. Visit <http://www.onguardonline.gov> for more information.
- Don't use an obvious password like your birth date, your mother's maiden name, or the last four digits of your Social Security number.



\* The law requires the major nationwide consumer reporting companies - Equifax, Experian and TransUnion - to give you a free copy of your credit report each year if you ask for it.

\* Visit <https://www.annualcreditreport.com> or call 877-322-8228, a service created by these three companies, to order your free credit reports each year.

account has been closed and the fraudulent debts discharged.

- \* Keep copies of documents and records of your conversations about the theft.
- File a report with law enforcement officials to help you with creditors who may want proof of the crime.
- Report the theft to the Federal Trade Commission. Your report helps law enforcement law enforcement officials across the country in their investigations.

\* Online: <http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft>

\* By phone: 877-438-4338, or 866-653-4261



# Earn a degree no matter what your schedule

CPL. MARGARET HUGHES  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Earning a college degree is often put on the back burner for active duty service members and their families.

Between deployments, field operations or a full-time job to make ends meet, many

families only see the cut and dry schedule of a fall and spring college semester as their only option.

The Combat Center's Education Office, along with several colleges aboard base, provide more than the cookie cutter option for earning a college degree, they make

available a multitude of different courses with an assortment of timelines.

Some colleges offer monthly courses, five-week accelerated courses and correspondence courses, said Noudam Khamphouy, an education technician for the Education Office.

"A correspondence course is similar to an MCI [Marine Corps Institute correspondence course]," Khamphouy said. "The course and information will be mailed to you, and many colleges that offer them allow up to a year to be turned in."

National University, a regionally accredited college for undergraduate and graduate degrees, is structured on a one course per month format with year-round registration. The university offers many classes on base as well as online.

Those who are in a hurry to finish their degree and have only 16 months left on active duty can utilize their tuition assistance to get out with an associate degree, said Gretchen Peshoff, an admissions advisor for National University.

To remain as a student with the university, only

one class per year is required, Peshoff said. So if the student chooses to take classes for three months and wants to stop for two, they are still enrolled with the school.

Also, up to four classes per month can be doubled up. So if they can maintain the work load, theoretically, someone could earn their associate degree in one year, she added.

Copper Mountain College, a local and regionally accredited school, offers five-week accelerated courses and also offers regular semester courses during the day on base.

The day courses are geared to fit the schedule of the military spouse, said Jim Arneson, the associate dean for CMC base programs.

CMC also offers a six-week emergency medical technician course, which has two classes scheduled this year, said Arneson. The course is very in depth and prepares the students to take a National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians exam for certification.

For more information about class schedules or options, call the Education Office at 830-6881.

**Spirit and Truth Worship Center**  
Perry L. Ford, Senior Pastor

Service Times:  
Sunday Morning Worship 9:45  
Wednesday Night Bible Study 7:00

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AWANA (during school year) 6:15-8:00 PM

Youth Groups:  
Jr High Wednesday 6:30-8:00 PM  
High School Sunday 6:30-8:30 PM  
Refinery (young adults) Saturday 6:30-8:30 PM

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Pastor: Rex Shaver  
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# Victim's Advocacy Program looking for volunteers

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Marine Corps Community Services Counseling Services Victim Advocacy Program is looking for people willing to volunteer a few days out of the month to help with domestic violence cases that arise throughout the base.

Domestic violence is not consistent with the Marine Corps Core Values, said Peter Morris, the Family Advocacy Program manager. It counters everything a Marine has been taught. This program, which is

a branch off the Family Advocacy Program, was developed to help put an end to violence in the homes of its service members.

Volunteers will go through 40 hours of instruction that will teach them how to respond to a case of domestic violence and the course of action to take when dealing with a victim and an offender.

Participants will be taught how to handle different scenarios such as sexual assault, child abuse and domestic violence. The volunteer will be able to acquire the hours needed at their own time and pace.

It is a very gratifying to work with the families and to help them change things for the better, Morris said. "In the long run, this job can be very rewarding."

Volunteers will work mostly at home, and have the opportunity to choose which days they want to work. They will be given a business cell phone so the Provost Marshal's Office can contact them when responding to a domestic violence case. The volunteer is responsible for taking notes on the case and possibly travel to the crime scene or the emergency room

to assist the victim.

"They will have to take down all the necessary information and if the victim needs help, go assist them with what they need," said Michelle Shotwell, the lead victim advocate. "When responding to a case, we bring contact information the victim might need and we tell them how to keep themselves safe."

Workers will do this by providing the victim with contact numbers to PMO, abuse hotlines, the local sheriff's department and addresses to local abuse shelters.

"I tell them to get copies

of all important documents like insurance documents, driver's license, passports and anything else they may need," said Morris, a Yucca Valley, Calif., native. "These documents need to be accessible to them only. That way if they need to flee, they have what they may need."

The Victim Advocacy Program will also speak to the suspected abusers command on behalf of the victim.

"We give them [the command] someone they can work with that will assist the victim," Morris said. "The command has other competing tasks like

preparing their Marines for war, so sometimes it is hard to give a lot of time to the abused spouse. We will help the command by working directly with them and the victim."

A victim's advocate will also support and inform victims of what is going on with their case. They will go with them to court or doctor's appointments all while empowering them and showing them they can live their lives without abuse, Shotwell said.

For more information or to volunteer with the Victim Advocacy Program, contact Shotwell at 830-4314.

## VET, from A1

persistence and overcoming the odds. He shared a brief synopsis of his story with the Marines proving what a man can endure and overcome.

After qualifying, at age 19, for the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin, Zamperini finished eighth in the 5,000 meter run, but finished his last lap in under a minute. His performance in the last lap caught the attention of Adolf Hitler, who insisted on a personal meeting.

Zamperini dedicated the following four years of his life to train for the 1940 Summer Olympics, originally scheduled in Tokyo.

With the outbreak of World War II, the Olympics were canceled and Zamperini was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the United States Army Air Forces, the precursor to the United States Air Force.

"Everyone wanted to get in the war and end it as soon as possible," Zamperini told the class.

Zamperini was deployed

to Hawaii as a B-24 Liberator bombardier. On May 27, 1943, he and his crew went on a search and rescue mission, when both of the plane's left engines went out causing it to crash into the sea below. With only three survivors, including him, they were stranded on a life raft in the middle of the sea.

After 27 days on the raft, the men spotted an aircraft, they were filled with hope they would be saved. The aircraft came in low and opened fire -- it was Japanese.

"The attack lasted for about 30 minutes," Zamperini said. "There were holes all through the raft, but in some amazement, not one bullet hit us."

The plane left after the men pretended to be dead in the water.

On the 46th day at sea, land was spotted, but only two men remained, Zamperini and pilot Russ Phillips. The next day they made it to the Marshall Islands, only to be captured by the Japanese.

Within 48 hours of being captured, Zamperini and Phillips were taken to

Kwajalein, also known as Execution Island.

"I would have rather been left on the raft," Zamperini said. "At least we had the open air, and the small ration of water did us better than the water they were giving us. The water would run right through us."

After 43 days in captivity



CPL MARGARET HUGHES

"The attack lasted for about 30 minutes. There were holes all through the raft, but in some amazement, not one bullet hit us," said 91-year-old Louis Zamperini, a former Olympian and World War II veteran.

with minimal food and water, and treated as a guinea pig for Japanese experiments, the two men were transferred to a prisoner of war camp in Japan, Zamperini said. He was separated from Phillips and sent to Tokyo Prisoner of War Camp Omori. There he met the man who would haunt his dreams, Sgt. Matsuhiro Watanabe, or as they referred to him, "The Bird."

"We had terrible names for all the other guards, but we were scared to give him a name like the others because we didn't want to know what he would do to us if he found out," Zamperini said.

In 1944, the Japanese exploited Zamperini's Olympian status. After an initial radio broadcast proving he was alive, he refused to read a second broadcast for the Japanese filled with propaganda, so they threatened to send him to a labor camp called Naoestsu.

"I thought there is no way I could read this and any place would be better as long as I was away from The Bird," Zamperini said.

When Zamperini arrived at the new camp, everyone was standing at attention when out stepped The Bird.

"I knew they transferred him there to get even with me for refusing to do the broadcast," Zamperini said.

While Zamperini was at Naoestsu, The Bird continued to torture him. Zamperini recalled when a sickly goat was at the camp and The Bird directed him to take care of it -- if the goat died, he would die. The goat died. Instead of The Bird killing Zamperini, he made the 60-pound man hold a two-by-four piece of wood above his head. The Bird was hanging out with the other guards while he stood there in silent pain. The Bird, fed up, punched Zamperini in the gut and he collapsed as the wood fell on top of him. He had held the wood over his head for more than 30 minutes.

Zamperini was under the torture of The Bird until September 1945, when the Japanese government signed the Japanese Instrument of Surrender to officially end the war.

Upon his return to the states, Zamperini attempted to rebuild his life. He married and had a daughter, but he could not forget his past. He turned to drinking and his marriage fell apart.

On the brink of a divorce, Zamperini found religion and used it to help himself heal with the help of his wife. He gave up drinking and no longer had nightmares about The Bird.

Since then, he has traveled back to Japan and visited the

prison guards who tortured him and forgave them. He also started youth programs for problem children in broken families. He continues to work with youth to this day and shares his amazing story to anyone who will listen.

Zamperini's story resonated through every Marine in the classroom. It provided a lesson in perseverance -- to never give up under any circumstances.

"Being a combat veteran myself, hearing what he went through and knowing that people can overcome something like that is so inspiring," said Sgt. Steve Regentz Jr., a Sergeant's Course class 2-09 student.

After speaking to the Marines, Zamperini specified how important it is for the Marines to be prepared for anything.

"I have seen the grueling conditioning the Marines go through, but they must always remain prepared," he said. "Leadership is so important. In business you can make mistakes, but in the military you cannot afford to make mistakes."

The recipient of the Louis Zamperini Leadership Award will also receive a copy of "Devil at My Heels," Zamperini's book about his journey for survival and forgiveness.

## CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

### Sunday

#### Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel Roman Catholic Services

8 a.m. Faith Formation /CCD  
Sept. - May building 1551  
8:45 a.m. Confessions+  
9 a.m. Rosary  
9:30 a.m. Catholic Mass\*  
9:30 a.m. Children's Liturgy of the Word  
4:15 p.m. Confessions+  
4 p.m. Choir Practice  
4:30 p.m. Rosary  
5 p.m. Catholic Mass

#### Christ Chapel

Lay-Led Independent Baptist Breakfast, 8 a.m. West Wing

#### Non-Denominational Christian Service

9 a.m. Worship\*  
9 a.m. Children's Church  
10:15 a.m. Sunday School\*  
6 p.m. Youth Group

#### Lay-led Gospel Service

11:30 a.m. Worship Protestant Chapel

#### Assemblies of God Fellowship

9:30 a.m. Sunday School  
10:30 a.m. Morning Service building 1707, room G

#### Legend

\* Indicates Child Care Provided  
+ For Appointments for Confessions call 830-6456/6482

### Weekday Events

#### Immaculate Heart of Mary

Mon-Fri 11:45 a.m. Catholic Mass (except holidays)

### Monday

#### Immaculate Heart of Mary

Mon-Fri 11:45 a.m. Catholic Mass (except holidays)

### Tuesday

#### Christ Chapel

9 a.m. Christian Women's Fellowship\* Sept. to May Evening service at 7 p.m. - Protestant Chapel west wing

#### Immaculate Heart of Mary

4-5:30 p.m. Children's RCIA  
5-8 p.m. Catechist Meeting (Second Tuesday each month)  
6-7:30 p.m. Baptism Class (First Tuesday each month)

### Wednesday

#### Christ Chapel

6 p.m. Praise Band Rehearsal  
6:30 p.m. Food/Fellowship  
7 p.m. Non-Denomination Bible Study  
7 p.m. Lay-led Gospel Bible Study

#### Immaculate Heart of Mary

9:30 a.m. Military Council of Catholic Women\* Sept. to May  
6 p.m. Youth Teen  
7 p.m. Knights of Columbus (1st Wednesday each month)

### Thursday

#### Immaculate Heart of Mary

6-7:30 p.m. RCIA Resumes Sept 11  
C&E Barracks building 1666  
11:30 a.m. Bible Study  
Chaplain Moran 830-6187

### Friday

#### Christ Chapel

5 p.m. Gospel Rehearsal

#### Immaculate Heart of Mary

12:15 p.m. 4:30 p.m. Exposition/Adoration Most Blessed Sacrament (First Friday each month)

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# 'War Dogs' say goodbye to CO who led them to Afghanistan

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Lt. Col. Richard D. Hall relinquished command of 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, to Lt. Col. John M. Reed in a change of command ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Feb. 13.

Hall, a Mankato, Minn., native, will move on to attend the Naval War College in Newport, R.I. He has also been selected to be promoted to colonel.

"I'm glad he is getting promoted to colonel," said Sgt. Maj. Matthew Brookshire, the battalion sergeant major. "It was an honor to serve with him and I hope I get the opportunity to serve with him again. I could not have asked for a better commanding officer."

Once the ceremony was over, Hall spoke to everyone who attended ceremony. He began by thanking the audience, which included the commanding general and the base sergeant and the Tactical Training Exercise Control Group for preparing his battalion for their continuous deployments.

He also thanked his family, Amy, his wife and 10 children who supported him

throughout his time and deployments in the Marine Corps.

"Thank you for keeping the home fires burning," Hall said to his wife. "Words cannot express what my wife has done to keep the wives of this battalion going while we were deployed."

Hall also thanked the Marines and sailors of his battalion and their constant support and hard work that kept the battalion rolling toward success.

"Take a step back and look at the enormity of what you all have accomplished," Hall said during his speech. "Reflect on all you have done. I am in awe."

Then turning to the rest of the crowd, Hall spoke about his Marines and sailors, saying he was extremely proud to have had the opportunity to fight beside them.

"I will fight beside these Marines and sailors any time and any place," Hall said. "And the results will be the same: We will win, they will lose. The respect I have for these men is to the highest honor because they have the highest character. It was a privilege to stand under these colors and serve with all of you."

After his speech, Hall gave Reed an opportunity to address his new battalion for the first time as their



Lt. Col. Richard D. Hall passes the colors to Lt. Col. John M. Reed in a change of command ceremony for 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Feb. 13.

commanding officer.

Reed, an Alliance, Ohio, native, said he was completely committed to leading the Marines and sailors of his new battalion to any battlefield at any time.

"This is my first time with this battalion," Reed said. "I am humbled to stand amongst them and lead them."

Reed, who came from the Strategic Initiative Group at

Headquarters Marine Corps, in Quantico, Va., said he had plans to prepare his battalion for future missions to Iraq or Afghanistan.

"This battalion is the finest thing I have ever

seen," said Reed. "All these Marines know what it takes to get a job done, and I have no doubt they will do what needs to be done to accomplish any mission that comes their way."

## ID THEFT, from A4

are to never give out personal information on the phone, through the mail or on the Internet, and not to use obvious passwords. Taking these steps helps discourage bandits by making PII harder to access.

The second step, detecting identity theft, requires people to be on the lookout for suspicious activity on their financial reports. Monitoring financial accounts and billing statements regularly can help peo-

ple spot fraudulent charges.

Another way to detect identity theft is to get an annual credit report. Credit reports contain personal information and billing history that will show if any false charges have been made.

"Free credit reports are a great tool for deploying service members," Proev said. "A lot of service members fall victim to identity theft while they are overseas because they have a harder time managing their accounts. A good way for them to spot fraudu-

lent charges is to get a credit report before and after they deploy."

The major nationwide consumer reporting companies – Equifax, Experian and TransUnion – are required by law to provide a free credit report once a year upon request. Anyone can check their free credit reports from these three companies by visiting <https://www.annualcreditreport.com>, or calling 877-322-8228.

The third step to reducing the risk of identity theft is to

defend against it. In sports, they say the best defense is a good offense. Fighting identity theft is no different.

By setting up fraud alerts on credit reports, closing accounts with suspicious activity, and reporting fraud to the police and the FTC, identity theft victims can protect themselves from further harm and get back on the right financial track quickly.

However, despite the number of measures that can be taken to safeguard PII, there is always a risk of becoming an

identity theft victim.

Service members are at a higher risk of identity theft simply because they use their social security numbers as the main way to identify themselves throughout the military, said Michael Sanford, the Combat Center's security manager.

"When Marines check in, I advise them to keep a close watch on their PII," said Sanford. "Marines constantly use their social security number[s] to identify themselves on paper and through e-mail. I explain to them how to be careful and handle that information with care."

In order to raise awareness as part of the Crime Reduction Campaign, NCIS will be hosting a Protect Your Identity Day Feb. 25 at the Marine Corps Exchange, Proev said.

In conjunction with Marine Corps Community Services,

the Provost Marshal's Office, the Criminal Investigation Division and the base financial planner, NCIS will provide a booth at the MCX and hand out information to shoppers about how to protect against identity theft.

"We're creating a proactive, collaborative approach toward preventing identity theft," Proev said. "Our goal is to try and reach as many people as possible. This is an important topic to discuss."

Proev also provides briefings to Marine Corps units about the importance of identity theft protection while they are deployed overseas.

The best way for a Marine or sailor to report an identity theft is to notify their chain of command, file a police report and contact the Federal Trade Commission at 877-438-4338. Service members and their families can also contact NCIS at 830-6275.



## TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM

by Lou Gerhardt

One of the best local examples of a tough minded optimist is my friend Doreen Chamberlin of Twentynine Palms.

Born in England in 1925 Doreen joined the British Army at 16. It was a terrible time in England's history as the Germans bombed her beloved county.

Doreen was not only a stalwart soldier during that conflict but a courageous leader and after eleven years of heroic service she retired as a Sgt. Major.

After she married Doreen moved to Twentynine Palms. Her husband died in 1987. Since that time Doreen has had several physical challenges. She not only had open heart surgery but in 1992 her right leg was amputated just below the knee. Doreen has her automobile specially equipped and continues to drive to this day.

Doreen has been a tough minded optimist in every aspect of her life. She is past president of her Kiwanis Club, her local Republican Women's Club, and the Emblem Club. She continues to serve on the board of several non-profit organizations where she is always a level-headed yet positive participant in all discussions.

Doreen has just completed 15 years as the Bishop's Warden of her local Episcopal Church where she has always been a loyal, devout and faithful member.

I spoke with Doreen the other day and she said "I'm a tough old bird." I replied "You are a tough minded optimist."

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## STARS, from A1

Medals to signify their heroism while under enemy fire.

"This is something I never expected to happen," said Morales, who saved the life of a wounded Battle Group Northwest commander by low-crawling across 30 meters of debris while under fire and dragging the British senior



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON  
Navy Lt. Robert Benowicz, the medical personnel officer-in-charge for Company E, 2/7, displays his Bronze Star Medal after a ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field, Feb. 12.

officer back to the safety of his convoy. "Everyone kept telling us we were going to get recognized, but I never believed what they were saying. I was just doing my job."

Benowicz also received the medal for saving lives. He was proactive in ensuring the Marines and sailors were medically stable before going on patrol.

He was also recognized for saving the life of a 10-year-old Afghanistan boy who was found with multiple gunshot wounds. Benowicz was able to stabilize the boy before sending him to the hospital where he later recovered from his injuries.

Benowicz said he wished the Marines and sailors they lost during the deployment were alive to be part of the ceremony.

"The hardest part of a deployment is losing Marines and sailors," Benowicz said. "They deserved to be here."

Lt. Col. Richard D. Hall, the battalion's commanding officer, and Sgt. Maj. Matthew Brookshire, the battalion sergeant major, had the honor of pinning the medals to each service member's chest.

"We are both glad we were able to give these Marines and sailors their Bronze Stars before he

left," Brookshire said about Hall leaving the battalion. "We thought it would be appropriate since he was deployed with them to Afghanistan."

Brookshire continued to say he was proud of all the Marines and sailors of his battalion.

"It is always the Marines and sailors of this battalion who rise to the occasion and get the job done," Brookshire said. "It is truly an honor to be their sergeant major. To me, they are all my heroes."

"They did a spectacular job in Afghanistan, more than what people know and they are finally getting recognized for their heroism."

After the ceremony, nearly everyone who was present during the ceremony moved forward to congratulate and shake the hands of the five Bronze Star Medal recipients.

The Bronze Star Medal is an individual decoration and is the fourth highest award within the Department of Defense for bravery, heroism or meritorious service.

The battalion is scheduled to hold more ceremonies for Marines and sailors who earned the Silver Star Medal and Navy Crosses for heroism and unwavering dispositions while deployed to Afghanistan.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

The Marines and sailors of 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, who received Bronze Star Medals for their heroic actions during their deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, stand in formation after receiving their medals, during a ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field, Feb. 12.

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**2004 FORD F150 XLT 2X4**, Excellent condition, 45,000 miles. Asking \$11,000. Cell 401-7315. 2/6/09

**2000 PORSCHE BOXTER 3**, Excellent condition, call for details. \$23,000. See lemon lot. Cell 401-7315. 2/6/09

**2005 YAMAHA V-STAR 650**, 1,700 miles, covered and garage kept. Excellent condition. Black. \$3,500. Call Bill Smith at (340) 332-5074. 2/6/09

**2003 CHEVY BLAZER ZR2 EDITION**, 68,000 miles, 4x4, lots of extras, great truck. \$11,900 OBO. Call Ricky 865-0077. 2/6/09

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**2005 HONDA \$2000 CONVERTIBLE 19"** wheels, new tires, low mileage. Asking \$21,800. See Lemon Lot. 696-7181. 1/16/09

**1990 CHEVROLET SILVERADO** Tourquoise show truck with gold flames. \$7500 OBO. Call Tim 367-7183. 1/16/09

**2007 HONDA ACCORD EX**. Excellent cond. only 34,071 miles! Sunroof, automatic transmission, alloy wheels. Asking \$17,500. (410) 279-2477. 11/28/08

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**TOYOTA TACOMA TRUCK BED DIVIDER**. Fits 2005-2008 models. Excellent condition. Asking \$200. Contact 835-4178. 11/28/08

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The deadline for submitting Trader ads is noon Wednesday, for the upcoming Friday's paper.

Trader Ad Forms are available at the Public Affairs Office and may be filled out during normal working hours at Bldg. 1417.

Ads may also be submitted through e-mail, but will only be accepted from those with an @usmc.mil address. If you are active duty, retired military or a family member and do not have an @usmc.mil address you can go to the PAO page of the base

Web site at: <http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/dirs/pao/> and complete a request to publish an ad.

The limitations for ads are: 15-word limit, limit of two ads per household and the Trader may be used only for

noncommercial classified ads containing items of personal property offered by and for individuals authorized to use this service. Such ads must represent incidental exchanged not of sustained business nature.

**Ads for housing rentals will not be considered for the Combat Center Trader.**

To have a "House For Sale" ad run in the Observation Post, applicants must provide Permanent Change of Station orders and have the ad

approved by Base Housing. This ensures the Combat Center Trader is not used for commercial real estate endeavors.

Ads are run on a first-come, first-serve, space available basis. If you have questions please call 830-3762.



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Amphibious assault vehicles with Company C, 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, carrying Marines from Weapons Platoon, Company F, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, maneuver to the U.S.S. Cleveland during an amphibious assault exercise off the coast of Del Mar Beach at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 9.



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Marines with Weapons Platoon, Company F, 2/7, support members of the Singaporean Armed Forces during a joint assault of a military operations in urban terrain facility at Range 25, Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 10.

**2/7, from A1**

with their foreign allies, practiced embarking and disembarking the U.S.S. Cleveland in amphibious assault vehicles, conducted a joint assault of Camp Pendleton's Military Operations in Urban Terrain facility with the SAF, viewed a presentation of optics by 1st Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, took part in a practical application of the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program, and helped JGSDF refine their defensive capabilities.

Cpl. Michael Martinez, a machine gun team leader with weapons platoon, Company F, 2/7, said the training allowed the warriors of the regiment to participate in a different kind of exercise that in his opinion reflected the original mission of the Corps.

"It's always good to see the amphibious side of the Marine Corps," said the San

Bruno, Calif., native.

Master Warrant Officer Joe Tan, a company trainer with the SAF who was observing the exercise, said he found the joint venture very beneficial and would like to continue the trend of sharing knowledge and experience with the Corps.

Tan said it was good for members of the SAF to gain valuable experience being on a ship and practicing amphibious assaults, because it helps them acclimate to the rough conditions of the sea.

The SAF also benefited from the urban operations training. That environment sharpened their skills at capturing an urban objective he said.

Tan also was also very thankful for the Marines and sailors who participated in the event and helped make it a success.

Tan said he found the knowledge the devil dogs of 2/7 shared with him and his fellow soldiers about

their recent deployment to Afghanistan was also very valuable.

Tan also explained how he was impressed with the well roundedness of each Marine. The fact that each Marine not only knew his own duties, but also those of the man to his left and right, as well as those of Marines senior to him, made them very effective he said.

Tan said it was important for SAF members to witness this because while warfighters of the SAF are taught to adopt this same mind-set in basic training, it is not as prevalent in the Singaporean forces as it is in the Corps.

"They are very versatile," said Tan about the Marines of 2/7. "They are a special call of people."

Marines and the SAF are slated to renew their friendship in mid-2009 when a second version of Valiant Mark is conducted in Singapore.



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Lance Cpl. James W. Robinson, an assaultman with Weapons Platoon, Company F, 2/7, talks with members of the Singaporean Armed Forces about his deployment to Afghanistan aboard the flight deck of the U.S.S. Cleveland during a break from their bilateral training session Feb. 9.

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# SPORTS AND LEISURE

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B1

## Fight Club 29 sticks to its fists



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Fight Club 29 traveled from the Combat Center all the way to Los Angeles for a boxing tournament at Heredia boxing club, Saturday, where two of their fighters lost their matches, but gained valuable experience.

Fight Club 29, which is usually Mixed Martial Arts only participated and trained in pure boxing to make them better in their main game, said Mark M. Geletko, the head coach for Fight Club 29.

"The purpose of boxing is to develop our standup game when we do pankration [fighting both on the ground and standing]," said the Pittsburgh native. "We want our fighters to be well rounded, and if we have them in grappling tournaments like

See FIGHTERS, B3

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Nate Wolf, a fighter with Fight Club 29, throws a punch at his competitor Saturday during a tournament at Heredia. Wolf and Joseph Yeampierre both took a step out of the cage and into the ring to try their hand at boxing.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Joseph Yeampierre, a fighter with Fight Club 29, gets ready as the second round of his match begins. Yeampierre lost his fight, but gained valuable experience as a fighter when Fight Club 29 participated in their first boxing match Saturday.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Nate Wolf and his opponent exchange blows in the corner of the ring. Wolf is a fighter with Fight Club 29 and participated in his first real boxing match Saturday at Heredia, in Los Angeles.

## Soaring to new heights

One Marine learned to fly; you can too

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

When Marines and sailors are off duty, there are a number of activities they can participate in to help them grow both personally and professionally.

Some service members play intramural sports, others enroll in college courses, and many seek the physical and mental challenges of the great outdoors, but how many can say they had the opportunity to learn to fly?

Staff Sgt. Michael Bailey, a BEARMAT range control operator, has earned his private pilot's license and said flying has been a passion of his throughout his life.

"Back when I was a kid, I was in the Civil Air Patrol," said the Atlanta native. "I was able to fly a few times and gained about 20 hours of flight time when I was 15, but after I joined the Marine Corps, I quit for a long

time because I was deploying a lot."

Bailey recently decided to continue working toward his goal of becoming a pilot and enrolled in The Flight School at Palm Springs, next to the Palm Springs International Airport, in October. His passion for flying and prior experience from the Civil Air Patrol helped him achieve his goal relatively quickly.

"To get your private pilot's license, you need a minimum of 40 hours of flight time," Bailey said. "For the average person, it takes somewhere between 55 to 60 hours."

Having already completed the 20 hours of flight time as a teenager, and using his prior knowledge, Bailey rapidly progressed through the course, earning his private pilot's license Dec. 23. He also received his high performance rating, allowing him to operate high performance aircraft.

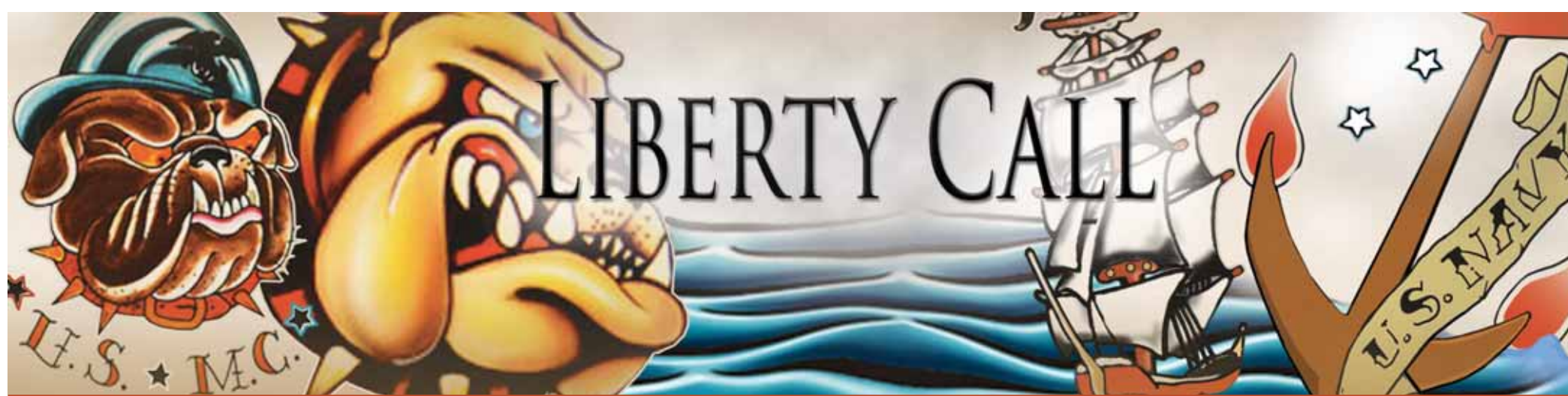
The Flight School at Palm

See FLIGHT, B4



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Staff Sgt. Michael Bailey, a BEARMAT range control operator, conducts a pre-flight inspection on a Cessna 172SP at The Flight School at Palm Springs tarmac Saturday. In his off-duty hours, Bailey worked hard to obtain his private pilot's license and hopes eventually to become a certified flight instructor.



<b>FRI. 2/20</b> <b>Art reception: Art by Jeannie Houston Antes &amp; Pauletta Chanco</b> Time: All day event Where: 29 Palms Creative Center & Gallery 6847 Adobe Rd., 29 Palms For more info call 361-1805 or visit <a href="http://www.29palmscreativecenter.com">http://www.29palmscreativecenter.com</a>	<b>FRI. 2/20</b> <b>Brooks &amp; Dunn</b> Time: 8 p.m. Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino 84-245 Indio Springs Pkwy. Indio For more info call (800) 827-2946 or visit <a href="http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com">http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com</a>	<b>SAT. 2/21</b> <b>Art Reception: Cuba, Si</b> Time: 7 p.m. Where: Studio Godot 61855 29 Palms Hwy. Joshua Tree For more info call 366-2200 or visit <a href="http://www.studiogodot.com">http://www.studiogodot.com</a>	<b>SAT. 2/21 &amp; SUN. 2/22</b> <b>Marion Bridge</b> Time: Sat. 8 p.m. & Sun. 2:30 p.m. Where: Groves Cabin Theatre 8768 Desert Willow Trail Morongo Valley For more info call 365-4523 or visit <a href="http://www.grovescabintheatre.org">http://www.grovescabintheatre.org</a>	<b>TUES. 2/24</b> <b>Community Drumming with Sam Sloneker</b> Time: 7- 9 p.m. Where: Joshua Tree Retreat & Event Center 59700 29 Palms Hwy. Joshua Tree For more info call 365-8371 or visit <a href="http://www.jtrcc.org">http://www.jtrcc.org</a>
<b>SAT. 2/28</b> <b>Connie Francis in concert</b> Time: 8 p.m. Where: Spotlight 29 Casino 46-200 Harrison Place Coachella For more info call (800) 585-3737 or visit <a href="http://www.spotlight29.com">http://www.spotlight29.com</a>	<b>MON. 3/2</b> <b>Articulture Club Meeting</b> Time: 7 p.m. Where: A Roadside Attraction 69197 29 Palms Hwy. 29 Palms, On the highway in Indian Cove area For more info call 366-0286	<b>THURS. 3/5</b> <b>Gilda's Club Presents: Rita Rudner one-night-only benefit concert</b> Time: 8 p.m. Where: Spotlight 29 Casino 46-200 Harrison Place Coachella For more info visit <a href="http://www.spotlight29.com">http://www.spotlight29.com</a> or call (800) 585-3737	<b>SAT. 3/7</b> <b>Puddle of Mudd</b> Time: 9 p.m. Where: Agua Caliente Casino 32-250 Bob Hope Drive Rancho Mirage For more info call (888) 999-1995 or visit <a href="http://www.hotwatercasino.com/theshow">http://www.hotwatercasino.com/theshow</a>	<b>FRI. 3/27</b> <b>The Moody Blues</b> Time: 9 p.m. Where: Agua Caliente Casino 32-250 Bob Hope Drive Rancho Mirage For more info call (888) 999-1995 or visit <a href="http://www.hotwatercasino.com/theshow">http://www.hotwatercasino.com/theshow</a>

## Mickey Rourke rocks the ring and the screen in 'The Wrestler'

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**The Wrestler**, Rated R  
Starring Mickey Rourke & Marissa Tomei

Mickey Rourke stars in "The

Wrestler" as a past-prime wrestling superstar trying to recapture glory days from 20 years ago.

Now a bruised and beaten, down but not yet completely over-the-hill weekend warrior, Randy "The

Ram" Robinson treks to matches in school gyms or VFW halls, far out of the spotlight in which he once basked.

Both outside and inside the ring, Randy has taken a lot of knocks. He lives in a messy trailer, has trouble paying the rent and works at a supermarket. He wife is long gone and his estranged daughter despises him.

As Cassidy, a stripper to whom Ram takes a shine, Marissa Tomei exposes herself in more ways than one, finding a spectrum of tender and tough emotional colors in a strong character that might have otherwise been hemmed in by clichés. It's a terrific performance.

The movie is particularly good at depicting, de-glamorizing and humanizing the backstage wrestling world—the friendly smiles behind the combatants' fearsome façades, the bloody tricks of the trade, the brutal toll on a human body after a night of slams, throws, stabs, jabs and thrashings.

Rourke makes you feel Randy's every ache, disappointment and battle scar, both inside and out. His scenes with Rachel Evan Wood, who plays his resentful daughter, are especially moving—and heartbreaking. "I'm just an old broken down piece of meat and I deserve to be all alone," he tells her. "I just don't want you to hate me."

Asked to headline a big reunion match, Randy knows he's not fully up to it



COURTESY PHOTO

Rourke's experience as a professional boxer gives him unique insight into the role and the world of the fighting ring.

but decides to go for broke. It could be his last shot at being on top again. As he climbs into the ring for the film's final scene, you brace for the blows you know he's about to take.

Both Rourke and Tomei are nominated, fittingly, for Academy Awards on Feb. 22.

In many ways, Randy the Ram is a lot like the actor playing him. Rourke took a hiatus from Hollywood in the early 1990s, when his leading-man star started to lose its shine, to compete as a professional boxer. After two years in the ring, his face had been pummeled so much that he was almost unrecognizable as the same

handsome actor who had once starred in "Diner," "Angel Heart" and "9 1/2 Weeks."


After that, he had trouble getting back into the acting groove. The good roles weren't coming anymore. It looked like the sun was setting on his acting career.

Now a lot of people in Hollywood are cheering Rourke's comeback. See "The Wrestler" and you'll know why. In Randy the Ram, an actor who's been down a long, hard road of his own rocks the ring with a role that packs one heckuva punch.



COURTESY PHOTO

Mickey Rourke gives a stunning performance as Randy the "Ram" Robinson. Both Rourke and Marissa Tomei are nominated for Academy Awards.



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5:00	5:25	5:30	5:40	5:45	6:00	6:10	7:00
<b>15 MCAGCC-Palm Springs Friday</b>							
Palm Springs Airport	Indian Canyon & Andreas (Casino)	Indian Canyon & Tacheva (Hospital)	Stater Bros WallMart	MCAGCC			
7:00	7:10	7:15	7:50	8:30			
<b>15 MCAGCC-Palm Springs Saturday/Sunday*</b>							
Base Post Exchange	Building 1664	Subway	29 Palms Community Center	29 Palms Staters	Joshua Tree Park Blvd.	Stater Bros WallMart	Palm Springs Airport
10:00	10:25	10:30	10:40	10:45	11:00	11:10	11:45
4:00	4:25	4:30	*4:40	*4:45	*5:00	*5:10	*5:45
<b>15 MCAGCC-Palm Springs Saturday/Sunday*</b>							
Palm Springs Airport	Indian Canyon & Andreas (Casino)	Indian Canyon & Tacheva (Hospital)	Stater Bros WallMart	MCAGCC			
12:00	12:10	12:15	12:50	1:35			
*6:00	*6:10	*6:15	*6:50	*7:35			

\*SUNDAY SERVICE BEGINS AT 29 PALMS COMMUNITY CENTER. All weekend service is for Saturday only except for the final return trip which includes both Saturday and Sunday service.

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## Cinema 6

MOVIE TIMES 365-9633

Slumdog Millionaire (R) Fri-Mon: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00 Tues-Thur: 2:30, 4:45, 7:00	Tyler Perry's Madea Goes To Jail (PG13) Fri-Mon: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00 Tues-Thur: 2:30, 4:45, 7:00
Friday The 13th (R) Fri-Mon: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00 Tues-Thur: 2:30, 4:45, 7:00	Taken (PG13) Fri-Mon: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00 Tues-Thur: 2:30, 4:45, 7:00

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# Combat Center sports standings



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL  
Jason Richmond, a player with Combat Logistics Battalion 7, jumps to shoot after a short breakaway. Headquarters defeated CLB-7 Wednesday night during the Commanding General's Intramural Basketball league.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL  
Robert C. Brown, a center for Headquarters Battalion, goes to dunk the ball against Combat Logistics Battalion 7.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL  
Lamar Townsend [left], and Jason Richmond fight for control of the ball. Headquarters defeated CLB-7.

## Intramural Basketball Standings as of Feb. 13

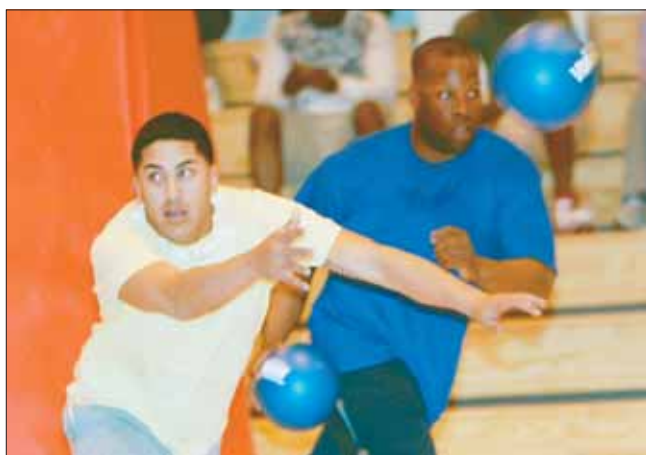
Team	Wins	Losses	%
NHTP	4	0	1000
MCCES All-Stars	4	0	1000
Ole School Plus	3	0	1000
1/7	3	1	750
1st Tanks	4	2	667
IPAC	3	2	600
MWSS-374 (B)	2	3	400
MCCES A	1	2	333
MWSS-374 (A)	1	4	200
MCCES Party	1	4	200
CLB-7	0	4	0
3rd CEB	0	4	0



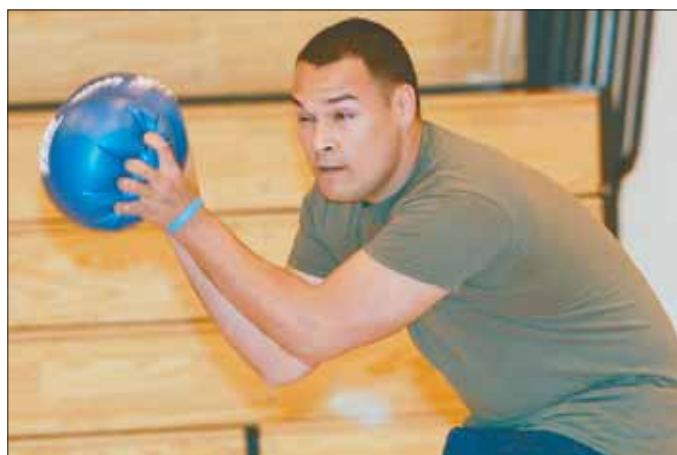
LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL  
Alvin Neveaux [left], a player with Headquarters Battalion, swats the ball out of the air to begin their game against Combat Logistics Battalion 7. Headquarters defeated CLB-7.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL  
Arthur Hopkins, a player with Fainting Goats, takes aim as he prepares to knock out a member of the opposing team. The Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball League meets every Tuesday night for play.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL  
Jesus Ramirez [left] and Maverick Moreland throw balls to their teammates to start off the first round of their match.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL  
Mike Bly, a player with the Hospital team, blocks a shot at the last second before it gets him out.

## Intramural Dodgeball league standings as of Wednesday

Team	Wins	Losses
Fainting Goats	6	0
MCCES A Co.	5	1
Jive Turkeys	4	2
Sapper	4	2
MTU	3	3
4 Horsemen (boot's)	3	3
Tanks #4	3	3
Dental	1	5
Hospital	1	5
Justice League	0	6

### Tuesday's scores

MCCES A Co.	3	Hospital	0
Sapper	3	Jive Turkeys	1
Fainting Goats	3	MTU	2
Tanks #4	3	Dental	1
4 Horsemen	3	Justice League	0



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL  
Rodney Bolton, a player with Marksmanship Training Unit, narrowly evades a blow to the face from the other team. Bolton was the last member of his team left standing during numerous rounds Tuesday night.

## FIGHTERS, from B1

the last one and boxing today, those will help us get to where we want to be."

The fighters don't have as much experience in boxing as they do in other areas, but they fared somewhat well considering it was their first time in the ring, Geletko said.

"We did okay today, but not everything turned out like we expected," he said. "We've only trained in boxing for a short time. These other fighters have been doing this for much longer, or training for a much longer time for their first fight."

Nate Wolf, a fighter with the club and a native of Jefferson, Wis., gave his

opinion on the difference between boxing and MMA.

"Boxing and MMA are two completely different sports," Wolf said before the fight. "We haven't trained that long for this compared to some of these other guys, but I guess we'll see how it goes."

Wolf ended up losing his fight, but he said he did learn from his experience.

"I've never boxed in a real match like this before," Wolf said. "But, even though it is such a different game, it will help with my cage fighting when I'm on my feet."

With last week's fighting behind them, Fight Club 29 will be going back to their original forte of grappling

and pankration.

"We're going to another Grappler's Extreme next week. It'll be ground fight-

ing," Geletko said. "That's what we do and what we've got more experience in, so it should be a good turnout."

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### Spring 2009

Feb. 4.....Milt Rasmussen Band  
Feb. 11.....Joe Nutter & His Sophisticated Swing  
Feb. 18.....Touch of Class  
Feb. 25.....Dick Richards Ensemble

March 4.....Milt Rasmussen Band  
March 11.....Touch of Class  
March 18.....Joe Nutter & His Sophisticated Swing  
March 25.....Milt Rasmussen Band

Admission Prices: CD Night - \$5/Person  
Spring 2009 - \$8/Person

**FLIGHT, from B1**

Springs offers two different training packages for obtaining a private pilot's license. According to their Web site, <http://www.flypalmsprings.com>, each package covers 50 hours of flight time and unlimited ground instruction, and provides students with the necessary gear to get started, such as the Pilot's Operating Handbook and sectional charts for mapping out flight plans.

The difference in the two packages is the type of aircraft students train on to complete their flight hours. The first package features a Cessna 172SP, while the second package is host to the Symphony OMF-160. Both aircraft are single propeller planes, but because the Symphony is newer, the second package costs a little more money.

Although there are many flight schools in Southern California, not many are covered by the Montgomery GI Bill in terms of cost, Bailey said. In order for Veteran's Affairs to cover costs for the school, they must be state certified, and what is known as Part 141 qualified, which means they are approved and inspected by the Federal Aviation Administration.

However, the VA will only provide monetary assistance for what is considered professional flight training, he added. Obtaining your private pilot's license is considered recreational and will not be covered.

"The VA won't cover the cost of getting your private pilot's license, but they will cover 60 percent of costs for certifications after private," Bailey said. "This includes instrument training, commercial pilot training, CFI [certified flight instructor] training, etc."

"To apply for VA benefits to cover flight training, all you need to do is send in your VA application along with a copy of your private pilot's license, and your first or second class medical certificate," Bailey said. "They need to be able to verify whether you are enrolled in professional or recreational training."

Bailey has helped The Flight School at Palm Springs become a VA-approved flight academy. The school has already become Part 141 qualified, and is scheduled to be inspected this week for state certification and VA approval. The academy should be officially approved within a month.

Through his research,



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Staff Sgt. Michael Bailey, a BEARMAT range control operator, rehearses a touch-and-go takeoff at the Desert Center airfield near the abandoned town of Rice, Calif., Saturday. Bailey, who has already earned his private pilot's license, is working toward becoming a certified flight instructor at The Flight School at Palm Springs, located next to Palm Springs International Airport.

Bailey was only able to find one other VA-approved flight school, which is the California Flight Academy in San Diego.

Bailey has now completed more than 80 hours of flight time and is halfway finished with his next qualification, which is instrument training. He said he hopes to continue his education and eventually become a certified flight instructor.

"This is a very rewarding experience for me," Bailey

said. "I want to become a CFI because I enjoy training and mentoring people. It's fulfilling to me because I can help people realize their dream of becoming pilots."

"It's a thrill, it's a rush and it's peaceful all at the same time," he added. "Personally, I find it very relaxing to be up in the sky flying."

However, becoming a pilot may be rewarding, but it isn't easy, Bailey said.

"It all depends on the per-

son," he said. "If you're looking into it, it has to be something you really love to do. It's forever challenging and you never stop learning."

"There are a lot of things you need to learn to be a pilot," he added. "It's also very dangerous, and it takes determination and drive to do it."

Although being a pilot can become monetarily rewarding in a short time, someone should only go through with it if it's something they're

truly passionate about, Bailey said. If someone is looking into being a pilot just for the money, they should probably choose a different profession.

To learn more about the VA benefits provided to flight school students, log on to <http://www.gibill.va.gov>. To see a list of flight schools for both fixed wing and rotary aircraft, visit <http://www.pilot-flight-instruction.com/california.flight.school>.

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